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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8626
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RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1128
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 2306
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0765
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA 0700
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0776
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 0152
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHDS/USMISSION USAU ADDIS ABABA
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1223

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NOUAKCHOTT 000460

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: MAURITANIAN ELECTION CHRONICLES FOR JULY 15 - 16

-- ANYBODY'S RACE

Classified By: Ambassador Mark Boulware for reasons 1.4 (c) and (d)

11. (C) Ministry of Foreign Affairs declines US help: The US Embassy offer of aircraft support for the transportation of AU/OIF observer missions to the faraway cities of Zouerate, Selibaby and Nema was declined by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on July 16. In a telephone conversation with the Ambassador, the Secretary General said that the Ministry already had the logistics in hand for the deployment of International Observers. DCM advised the Francophonie representative who voiced disappointment and said he would have to work out ground transport. Charge noted that Zouerate and Nema were two day's driving distance. The Ambassador advised the International Contact Group of the Ministry's position the afternoon of the 16th. The African Union's Ambassador Annadif was particularly upset. The Mission had planned to send three Mission Officers with the AU/OIF delegations. We have now requested accreditation for four officers to monitor in Nouakchott and the nearby provincial capitals of Akjoujt and Rosso. Post notes with appreciation the draft Election Observation Guide forwarded by DRL.

12. (U) Revised electoral list published: The Ministry of the Interior officially published the revised electoral list for the July 18 elections. The list revision mandated by the Dakar Accord took place from June 25 to July 5. With those added, there are now 1,239,892 registered voters. Nouakchott is the most important electoral region with 295,802 voters followed by the Trarza with 152,243.

13. (U) International observers start arriving: According to press reports, approximately 250 international observers will monitor the election.

14. (U) Mauritanian civil society questions CENI neutrality: Civil society organizations questioned CENI independence claiming the institution's composition is "totally politicized with certain members who are part of candidate campaigns, which is a flagrant violation of the Dakar Accord." The Aziz camp has also started to attack the CENI questioning why they ever accepted the Dakar provisions giving the opposition a majority stake in the CENI.

15. (U) Boulkheir to expose Aziz's alleged corruption: Presidential candidate Messaoud Ould Boulkheir is planning a political rally at Nouakchott's Capital Stadium on July 16 in which he will provide "solid proof" of Mohamed Ould Abdel

Aziz' corruption. Boulkheir stated in a July 16 interview with RFI that not all the conditions for a free and fair elections are in place. He stressed that an Aziz win would only be possible through fraud. If Aziz wins, he will contest the elections and rally the public.

¶6. (U) Isolated campaign violence: Aziz's supporters threw rocks at Ahmed Ould Daddah upon his July 15 return to Nouakchott from a trip to Akjoujt. An RFD National Council member was mugged by a group of young Aziz supporters when he was attempting to put up Daddah posters. Aziz supporters beat him up, stole his robe, 100,000 UM (\$370 USD) and his cell phones. Police dispersed with batons a group of Aziz supporters that were waiting for the candidate to arrive in Nouakchott's Ksar neighborhood. According to the press, the police had received orders from the Hakem of Ksar, who opposes Aziz, to break up the crowd. Rumor says that the Hakem did this to spite the major of Ksar, a strong Aziz supporter.

¶7. (U) Daddah swears he will contest results if Aziz wins: In an interview with RFI, Daddah stressed he had "received information about fraud schemes already in place." He stated "proces verbaux" (Note: these are the documents that certify polling station results after counting the ballots. End note.) had already been filled out with results favorable to Aziz and that Aziz supporters planned to swap proces verbaux at the last minute. He state this type of fraud is possible because all the administrative structures favorable to Aziz have been in place for 10 months. Daddah swore to expose fraud and contest the results of the election if necessary.

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He said has never done it in the past to avoid spilling blood but he will do it now. He regrets not denouncing the August 6 coup against Abdallahi and recognized it was a mistake.

BOULWARE